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Environmental assessment for the McDonn



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**Montana Department  
of  
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



1400 So. 19th  
Bozeman, MT 59715

September 24, 1993

**TO:** Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Room 106, POB 201704, Helena, MT 59620-1704  
Dept. of Health & Environmental Sciences, Director's Office, Cogswell Building, POB 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901  
Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Director's Office  
Parks Division  
Fisheries Division-Bruce Rehwinkel  
Wildlife Division  
Lands Section  
Design and Construction  
Legal Unit  
Mary Ellen McDonald  
Karen Hillstrom (Parks Division, Helena)  
Les Davis, Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman, MT 59717  
Jim Rector, FWP Commission, P.O. Box 1360, Glasgow, MT 59230  
Montana Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, POB 201202, Helena, MT 59620-1202  
Montana State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Ave., POB 201800, Helena, MT 59620-1800  
Jim Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, POB 1184, Helena, MT 59624  
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, POB 595, Helena, MT 59624  
George Ochenski, POB 689, Helena, MT 59624  
Gallatin County Commissioners, Gallatin County Courthouse, Bozeman, MT 59715  
Jerry DiMarco, 2708 W. Mendenhall, Bozeman, MT 59715

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for the McDonnell property acquisition adjacent to Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park, and is submitted for your consideration. Questions and comments will be accepted until 5 p.m., October 15, 1993. If you have questions, feel free to contact me at 994-4042. All comments should be sent to the undersigned at 1400 S. 19th, Bozeman, MT 59715

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

*Gerald Walber for R.V.*

Richard Vincent  
Acting Regional Supervisor

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# DRAFT

## MEPA/NEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST

### PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of Proposed State Action Purchase of lands adjacent to state park property.
2. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
3. Name of Project Madison Buffalo Jump State Park
4. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency)

Agency

5. If Applicable: Not a construction project.

Estimated Construction/Commencement Date Unknown

Estimated Completion Date     

Current Status of Project Design (% complete)     

6. Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township)

That certain tract of land situate in Section Thirty-three (33), Township One (1) North of Range Two (2) East of the Montana Principal Meridian in the County of Gallatin, State of Montana, lying East of the County Road as the same presently exists, and West of the easterly section line of said Section 33, containing an area of approximately 20 acres.

7. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

(a) Developed:  
residential . . . . .      acres  
industrial . . . . .      acres

(b) Open Space/Woodlands/  
Recreation . . . . .      acres

(c) Wetlands/Riparian  
Areas . . . . .      acres

(d) Floodplain . . . . .      acres

(e) Productive:  
irrigated cropland . . . . .      acres  
dry cropland . . . . .      acres  
forestry . . . . .      acres  
rangeland . . . . . 20 acres  
other . . . . .      acres

8. Map/site plan: attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.

Topographic map and Conservation plan map attached

**9. Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action.**

The proposed action is to purchase a parcel of land (approximately 20 acres) adjacent to Madison Buffalo Jump State Park owned by Steve McDonnell. The 20 acre parcel lies adjacent to the west boundary of the park. The purpose of the proposed action is to acquire a thin strip of private property lying between the state park boundary and the county road (the main park access) to serve as a buffer to the park and to preserve the values for which the park was established. Commercial activity or inappropriate development would seriously impact aesthetics, setting characteristics, recreational opportunities and cultural values.

Purchase of this property would benefit the state park by eliminating the possibility that they could be developed in a manner that would jeopardize the cultural, natural, scenic or recreational values of the adjacent park lands. In addition, public recreation opportunities would be enhanced with the larger land base.

**10. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.**

(a) Permits:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
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N/A

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
--------------------	-----------------------

N/A

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
--------------------	-------------------------------

N/A

**11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the EA:**

None

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

12. LAND RESOURCES	IMPACT ☐				Can Impact Be Mitigated ☐	Comment Index
	Unknown ☐	None	Minor ☐	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
▶ a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				
▶ c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?						
f. Other <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

12. AIR	IMPACT ☐				Can Impact Be Mitigated ☐	Comment Index
	Unknown ☐	None	Minor ☐	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
▶ a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))		X				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ♦ For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a) N/A						
f. Other <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
  - ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
  - ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

3. <u>WATER</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ☼				Can Impact Be Mitigated ☼	Comment Index
	Unknown ☼	None	Minor ☼	Potentially Significant		
► a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of flood water or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ♦ ♦ For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c) N/A						
m. ♦ ♦ For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a) N/A						
n. Other: <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- ☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦ ♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT <sup>α</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>α</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>α</sup>	None	Minor <sup>α</sup>	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?		X				
f. ♦ ♦ For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland? N/A						
g. Other: <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1e (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦ ♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

► 5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ☼				Can Impact Be Mitigated ☼	Comment Index
	Unknown ☼	None	Minor ☼	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. ♦ ♦ For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f) N/A						
i. ♦ ♦ For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d) N/A						
j. Other: <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ☼				Can Impact Be Mitigated ☼	Comment Index
	Unknown ☼	None	Minor ☼	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?		X				
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other: <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- ☼ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦ ♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

7. <u>LAND USE</u>	IMPACT <sup>□</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>□</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>□</sup>	None	Minor <sup>□</sup>	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?			X			
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

7a. A portion of the subject property is currently used for livestock grazing. Purchase of the property for state park purposes would preclude this activity in the future thus interfering with the profitability of the existing land use.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u>	IMPACT <sup>□</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>□</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>□</sup>	None	Minor <sup>□</sup>	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. ♦ For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicents be used? (Also see 8a) N/A						
e. Other: <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ☐				Can Impact Be Mitigated ☐	Comment Index
	Unknown ☐	None	Minor ☐	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?			X			
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
f. Other: <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9d. The northern end of the subject property has been used for livestock grazing. This activity would not be continued under state ownership.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ☐				Can Impact Be Mitigated ☐	Comment Index
	Unknown ☐	None	Minor ☐	Potentially Significant		
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify: _____		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?			X			
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased used of any energy source?		X				
▶ e. Define projected revenue sources			X			
▶ f. Define projected maintenance costs.			X			
g. Other: <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10b. The subject property is assessed property taxes based on its value as agricultural land. Gallatin County Assessor's Office reported that the subject property is assessed taxes as part of a larger 360 acre parcel. As such, it is impossible to cite the market value of the 20 acres and the amount of property

- ☐ Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ◆ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ◆◆ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

taxes it contributed to Gallatin county.

10e. A revenue source for purchase of this property has not definitively been established at this time. A possible FWP land trade may result in surplus land values for the department which could be applied towards the purchase of the McDonnell property.

10f. The maintenance costs for the parcel would be minimal as the property would be left in it's natural state. Weed control efforts would not exceed \$50 per year. Money for this work would come from the existing park budget. The Madison Buffalo Jump budget sources are earned revenue and accommodations tax.

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

- ▶ Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ◆ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ◆◆ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

▶ 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ☼				Can Impact Be Mitigated ☼	Comment Index
	Unknown ☼	None	Minor ☼	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
▶ c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)		X				
d. ♦ ♦ For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c) N/A						
e. Other: <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT ☼				Can Impact Be Mitigated ☼	Comment Index
	Unknown ☼	None	Minor ☼	Potentially Significant		
▶ a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ♦ ♦ For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a) N/A						
e. Other: <u>NONE</u>						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):



Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.



Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)



Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.



Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE  Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT <sup>□</sup>				Can Impact Be Mitigated <sup>□</sup>	Comment Index
	Unknown <sup>□</sup>	None	Minor <sup>□</sup>	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ♦ For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e) N/A						
g. ♦ ♦ For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required. N/A						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

- Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- ♦ Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- ♦ ♦ Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Two alternatives have been considered for this proposal:

1. No action; do not purchase McDonnell property.
2. Purchase of McDonnell property (approximately 20.0 acres) with funding source to be determined.

ALTERNATIVE I: No Action/Do not seek to acquire the McDonnell property.

This alternative would not alter the status of the lands, which would remain open to continued livestock grazing. The potential for incompatible development or inappropriate commercial activities would pose a threat to the park. Development of this property would detract from the natural, cultural, scenic and recreational values found on the adjacent state park land.

The ingress and egress easement which the department holds on the property would stay in effect.

Under this alternative the property would remain on county tax rolls and continue to provide property tax income to Gallatin county.

ALTERNATIVE II: Purchase McDonnell Property (approximately 20.0 acres)

Under this alternative the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks would purchase the McDonnell property (approximately 20.0 acres) at appraised value, (yet to be determined), as funding became available. At the present time, the availability of funding and a funding source have not been identified.

The acquisition of this property will produce benefits, such as creating a definable park boundary along the county road, thereby establishing a buffer zone between the county road and the primary use areas of the state park. Another benefit of state ownership would be the protection of natural, cultural, scenic and recreational values of the subject property.

Acquisition of this property would result in minor impacts to the human environment, in that approximately 20.0 acres of private land from which property taxes are paid to Gallatin County, would be removed from the tax rolls. This alternative would, in addition, preclude commercial development of this property in the future.

3. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:

None

4. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? YES / NO If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

An E.A. is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action, because there are no impacts to the physical environment and few minor impacts to the human environment.

5. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

The appropriate level of public involvement is the publication of 1 legal notice in the Helena Independent Record, and the Bozeman Daily Chronicle advertising the availability of copies of the E.A. and dates of the 14 day comment period.

6. Duration of comment period if any:

October 1 through 5 p.m., October 15, 1993

7. Name, title, address and phone number of the Person(s) Responsible for Preparing the EA:

Jerry Walker  
Regional State Park Manager  
1400 S. 19th  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
(406) 994-4042

### **PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT**

In 1967, the State of Montana purchased the Madison Buffalo Jump property. In addition, an easement was granted which conveyed public access and parking rights on 6 acres of the property now proposed for acquisition.

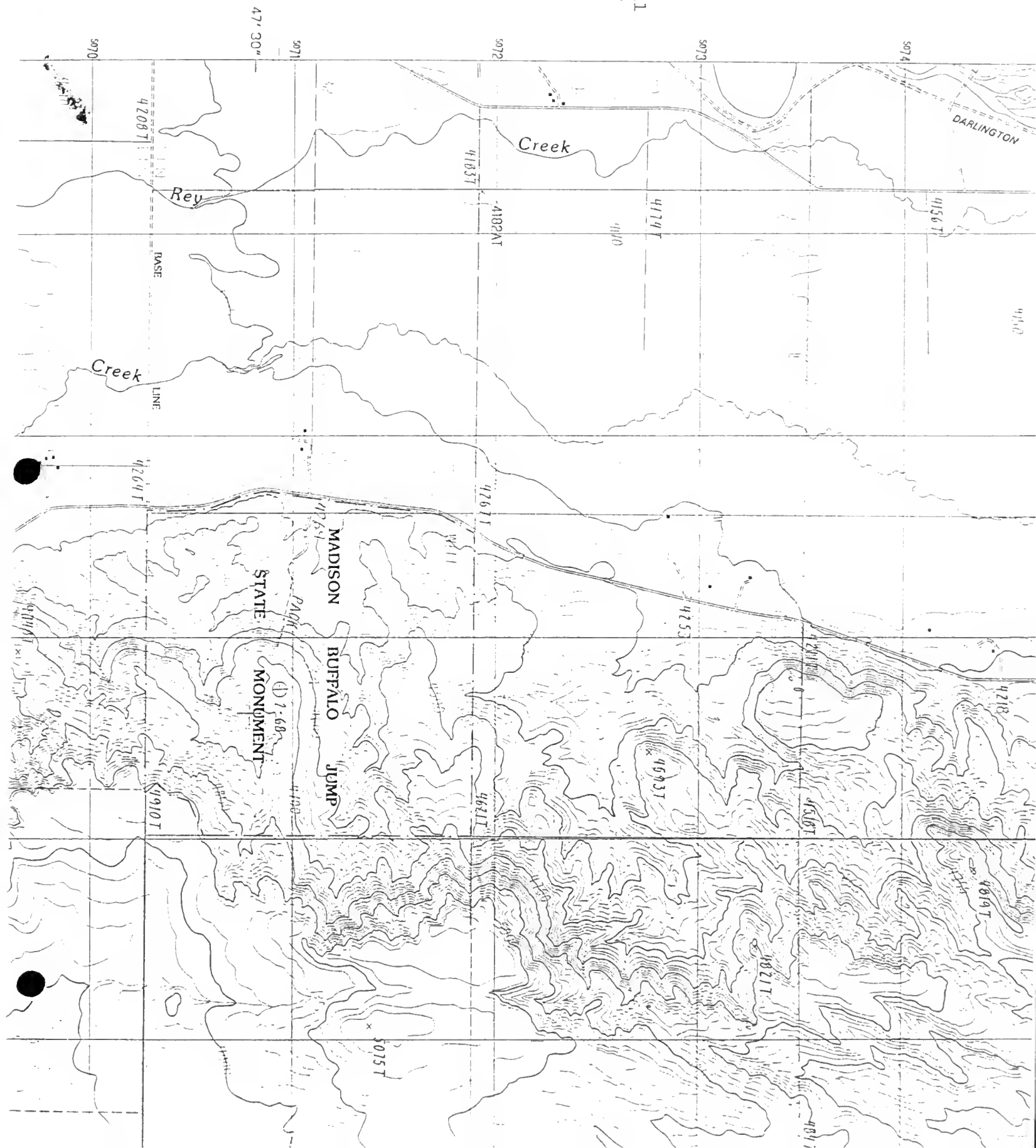
For many years the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks granted Steve McDonnell a lease to graze livestock on a portion of the Madison Buffalo Jump State Park. Temporary fencing was used to confine cattle within the leased portion of the state park. A portion of the property now proposed for acquisition was contiguous to the leased portion of the state and as such was used as a common pasture.

In 1991, the department informed Steve McDonnell of it's intent not to renew the livestock grazing lease within Madison Buffalo Jump State Park. At that time, Mr. McDonald discussed with the department his need to graze livestock on the entire property now proposed for acquisition, including the entrance to the park and picnic area parking lot (both lying on the easement), to compensate for the lost grazing opportunities in the park. In addition, Mr. McDonnell discussed plans with the department to conduct commercial activities on the subject property which department officials felt might negatively impact park values. At that time, negotiations were begun with Mr. McDonnell to purchase the 20 acres between the county road and the park boundary to be added to Madison Buffalo Jump State Park.

An appraisal of the subject property is currently underway and the results are expected in early October, 1993. It is likely that the property will be surveyed at the conclusion of the appraisal. The only minor issue related to this proposed action is the removal of 20 acres from the tax base of Gallatin County. The amount of property tax derived from this parcel of land is negligible and county quality of life values will be enhanced to a greater extent by this property being a part of Madison Buffalo Jump State Park.



McDonnell  
Property



CONSERVATION PLAN MAP

Owner Montana Fish, Game and Parks Operator Same  
County GALLATIN State MONTANA Date 12/82  
Approximate acres 620 Approximate scale 1 inch = 660 feet  
Cooperating with Gallatin County Conservation District  
Plan identification Paul Shaffer Photo number 179-50  
Assisted by USDA Soil Conservation Service

TRACT B

**Montana Department  
of  
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



1400 So. 19th  
Bozeman, MT 59715

October 26, 1993

TO: Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Room 106, POB 201704, Helena, MT 59620-1704  
Dept. of Health & Environmental Sciences, Director's Office, Cogswell Building, POB 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901  
Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Director's Office  
Parks Division  
Fisheries Division-Bruce Rehwinkel  
Wildlife Division  
Lands Section  
Design and Construction  
Legal Unit  
Mary Ellen McDonald  
Karen Hillstrom (Parks Division, Helena)  
Les Davis, Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman, MT 59717  
Jim Rector, FWP Commission, P.O. Box 1360, Glasgow, MT 59230  
Montana Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, POB 201202, Helena, MT 59620-1202  
Montana State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Ave., POB 201800, Helena, MT 59620-1800  
Jim Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, POB 1184, Helena, MT 59624  
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, POB 595, Helena, MT 59624  
George Ochenski, POB 689, Helena, MT 59624  
Gallatin County Commissioners, Gallatin County Courthouse, Bozeman, MT 59715  
Jerry DiMarco, 2708 W. Mendenhall, Bozeman, MT 59715

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Please find attached the Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact for acquisition of the McDonnell Property adjacent to Madison Buffalo Jump State Park.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

*Richard Vincent by J.W.*

Richard Vincent  
Acting Regional Supervisor



**Montana Department  
of  
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact  
For Acquisition of the McDonnell Property  
Adjacent to Madison Buffalo Jump State Park

Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks  
Region 3  
1400 S. 19th  
Bozeman, MT 59715

November, 1993

Description of Proposed Action:

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks proposes to acquire fee title to 20 acres owned by Steve McDonnell adjacent to the western edge of the Madison Buffalo Jump State Park. The action will extend the park boundary to the county road along the west side of the park.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI):

Based on the analysis in the Environmental Assessment (EA), I find Alternative 2, Purchase of McDonnell Property, to be the preferred alternative to buffer the existing state park and preserve and protect important natural, cultural, scenic and recreational values. All comments received supported acquisition of the subject property and recommended no changes to the document so the draft EA will be accepted as the final EA with no changes.

I have evaluated the EA and applicable laws, regulations, and policies and have determined that this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

The final Environmental Assessment, and the FONSI may be viewed at or obtained from the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Region 3, Bozeman, Montana. Please direct requests and questions to:

Dick Vincent, Acting Regional Supervisor  
1400 S. 19th  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
(406) 994-4042



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